What is claimed is:

1. A shading correction method for a heat development recording apparatus which exposes a heat development recording material including a heat development and photosensitive material or a photosensitive and heat sensitive recording material to a laser beam to form a latent image on the heat development recording material and performs heat development for the heat development recording material on which the latent image is formed, comprising the steps of:

before the heat development recording apparatus is shipped, continuously outputting a continuous recording pattern to a recording surface, measuring recording density of the continuous recording pattern by a recording density measuring unit, generating a shading correction table for each pixel, and registering the shading correction table in a storing unit; and

after the heat development recording apparatus is shipped without mounting the recording density measuring unit thereon, outputting a discrete recording pattern, measuring recording density of the discrete recording pattern for each discrete recording position, generating another shading correction table, and updating the shading correction table registered in the storing unit.

2. The shading correction method for the heat development recording apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein the continuous recording pattern and the discrete recording pattern are recorded with recording density including a plurality of half tone densities, and a shading correction of all gradation densities is performed by interpolating each intermediate recording density between one and another.

3. A heat development recording apparatus which exposes a heat development recording material including a heat development and photosensitive material or a photosensitive and heat sensitive recording material to a laser beam to form a latent image on the heat development recording material and performs heat development for the heat development recording material on which the latent image is formed, comprises:

a control unit which generates a shading correction table on the basis of measured results of the recording densities of an shading correction pattern which is output and corrects densities upon heat development,

wherein the control unit involves a connecting unit for inputting measured results of recording densities from a first recording density measuring unit for measuring a

recording density for each pixel of a first shading correction pattern which is continuously recorded on a recording surface and a second recording density measuring unit for measuring a recording density at each discrete recording position of a second shading correction pattern which is discretely recorded on the recording surface.